HINTS

RESPECTING SOME OF THE

UNIVERSITY OFFICERS,

ITS JURISDICTION,

ITS REVENUES, &c.

Submitted to the Consideration of the Members of the Senate of the University of Cambridge.

By ROBERT PLUMPTRE, D.D.
MASTER OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE.

CAMBRIDGE,

Printed by *J. Archdeacon*, Printer to the UNIVERSITY;

For *J. & J. Merrill*, in Cambridge; *T. Cadell*, in the Strand, *B. White*, in Fleetstreet, *G. Wilkie*, in St. Paul's Church Yard, London.

MDCCLXXXII.

HINTS, &c.

THE length of time elapſed ſince 1570, when Q. Eliz. ſtatutes were given us, with the changes which it has introduced in the national affairs, in thoſe of the Univerſity, in the mode of life and of education, while little or no alteration has been made in the emoluments of the Univerſity Officers, have gradually ſo leſſened the profits of ſeveral of them, as to render them inadequate to the labour of their offices, and produced ſome impropriеties in the conduct of our public buſineſs. The redreſs of theſe injuries of time and accident (however, undoubtedly, wiſhed by the ſucceſſive Members and Officers of the Univerſity) has been

till within a few years paſt prevented by the ſtate of its revenues. But of late years, happier times, the aſſiſtance of friends, a diligent attention to the ſources of its revenues, and prudent conduct of them, have ſo far removed this obſtruction, that reaſon, propriety, and neceſſity, ſeem to juſtify the calling the attention of the Univerſity to theſe ſubjects.— Fully convinced that they do ſo, and wiſhing to perform the little ſervices to it, that can be within his power, the Writer preſumes to ſuggeſt the following Hints on theſe ſubjects to the conſideration of its Senate.

In ſpeaking above, of the increaſe of the Univerſity revenues, he does not allude to that honorable and liberal teſtimony of regard to learning and the Univerſity which the parliament has given in the laſt ſeſſion. This the public ſeems

to

to expect (and with juſtice) ſhould be employed in purpoſes immediately related to the preſs and to literature; that is, that it ſhould be expended in encouraging and aſſiſting the publication of learned works, and in printing correctly, decorouſly, and at reaſonable prices, ſuch books as are of extenſive *general* uſe, or which are *particularly* called for, and uſed in the *Univerſity*. This fund, therefore, he conſiders as ſacred to theſe purpoſes.—But being ſo, it conveys this farther advantage, that it leaves the other parts of our revenue, more at liberty.

Theſe have been much increaſed of late years by conſiderable ſavings, which have been veſted in the public funds. The produce of theſe, whether the principal is thought proper to be employed in a purchaſe of land, for the better continuance of ſuch purpoſes as it ſhall be

applyed to, or kept where it is, may be uſed (it is apprehended) with great credit and advantage to the Univerſity, in the purpoſes hinted at above in *general*, and which ſhall now be pointed out more *particularly*.

I begin with the Vice-chancellor. For though *his* fees and other profits are ſtrictly ſpeaking what the ſtatutes allot to the *Chancellor*, yet as he has now for a long ſeries of years had the whole of the burdens and emoluments of this latter office, it will be more agreeable to the received and familiar ideas of the Univerſity, to conſider them as belonging to the former.

While the trouble of the office of Vice-chancellor has (there is much reaſon to think) greatly increaſed, and the expences of it have moſt *undoubtedly* done ſo,

ſo, ſome parts of its emoluments have ſtood where they were two hundred years ago, and others have decreaſed. His ſealing fees continue (as they were then) at 4*d*. The B. A. ſtill pays his 4*d*. and the ſuperior degrees their 2*s*. The compoſitions of thoſe whom their income ſubjects to them, and from whence a very principal part of the profits of the Vice-chancellor, and ſome other Univerſity officers, ariſe, ſtand as they were originally fixed. The profits of carriers licences have nearly ceaſed, and thoſe of corn licences, and court fees entirely. An annual allowance therefore to him out of the Univerſity cheſt (ſuch as its circumſtances ſhall be thought to admit of) ſeems reaſonable, for the credit of the Univerſity, and a juſt debt to the almoſt inceſſant trouble and fatigue of the office.

And if *theſe* can likewiſe be diminiſhed, the eaſe given, together with ſuch reward as can be added for the remaining trouble would, probably, not be more than is due to it, nor than it calls for. To do *much* for the former purpoſe is difficult, if not impracticable; but it ſeems poſſible to do *ſomething* towards it. The beſt *mode* of doing it, which occurs to the Writer on ſome thought beſtowed on the ſubject, is by empowering the Vice-chancellor to take an aſſiſtant to himſelf in thoſe parts of his buſineſs which he ſhall think him capable of, and to reward him with ſuch ſum, not exceeding as his ſervices ſhall appear to merit. The times and occaſions which moſt admit of ſuch aſſiſtance ſeem to be theſe: a perſon to attend for one or two days at the end of each quarter, to take in and to pay the *quarterly* bills, bringing

bringing the account at once, and at a fitting time to the Vice-chancellor.—The like after the expiration of his year, for receiving the *annual* bills, and then at a proper diſtance of time for paying them, after examination by the Vice-chancellor. The tranſcribing his accounts for the audit. The writing official letters, and copying ſuch letters or papers, as occaſion ſhall require. This aſſiſtance, while it brings eaſe to the Vice-chancellor, may alſo improve the place of ſome Univerſity Officer, which has ſuffered in its profits from lapſe of time, and change of circumſtances.

It may be worth conſideration, likewiſe, whether he may not be farther eaſed, by not being made invariably (as now) a member of every ſyndicate, and his preſence neceſſary at every meeting of it. In reſpect to that for the *preſs* in parti-

particular; it ſhould ſeem that the buſineſs of it might be conducted with more advantage to the Univerſity, as well as with greater eaſe to the Vice-chancellor, if, inſtead of his being at the head of it, a preſident from among the Syndics was either appointed by grace, when new Syndics are next made, or choſen (for ſuch term as ſhall be thought proper) by the Syndics themſelves. Such a perſon would be *practiſed* in the buſineſs; while the Vice-chancellor often comes in an *entire ſtranger* to it, and has only a year, in which he is encumbered and hurried with a variety of other affairs, to learn it in.

The Proctors come next under conſideration. They are in the ſame ſituation with the Vice-chancellor, in reſpect to fees for degrees, and to compoſitions. Beſides this, a part of their profit (and

no

no inconſiderable one) is raiſed in a way which has an appearance diſreputable to the Univerſity, and is diſcreditably underſtood by thoſe who pay it. Even the *remoteſt* cauſe for ſuch an appearance ſhould be taken away; and it is therefore much to be wiſhed that this ſource of profit ſhould be ſtopped, and a compenſation given them in lieu of it. And if this can be made dependent upon the degree of diligence and vigilance exerted by *them* in preſerving the order and regularity of the Univerſity, it will amply repay it, by contributing *doubly* to its credit and honour.

The Taxers office, it is to be feared, wants *attention* and *execution* rather than *reward*. It is an office, however, in itſelf of much importance to the Univerſity, and to the place in general, and well deſerves ſome conſideration beſtowed upon it; and may, perhaps,

perhaps, admit of improvement both in the execution, and in its recompence.

The Regiſtrary is in a ſomewhat better ſituation than moſt of the other Univerſity Officers. For the *extraordinary* buſineſs of his office, he has no *ſettled* recompence, but makes his own charges. For the *ordinary* buſineſs, he has fixed fees from degrees; which, if they were not *much* more than a *ſufficient* recompence for his trouble in 1646, cannot poſſibly be an *adequate* one now.

The Eſquire Beadles, ſo far as the profits of their office ariſe from degrees, are in the ſame ſtate with ſeveral of the before-mentioned Officers. The part of it conſiſting in *ſtipend* continues the ſame that it was at the time Q. Eliz. ſtatutes were given, and conſequently is very much leſſened in *real value*. Some other advan-

advantages are greatly diminiſhed, and others entirely loſt. — Their trouble, it is true, has likewiſe been leſſened in ſome important particulars; but ſtill it merits conſideration, whether their labour and its reward now bear a proper proportion to each other, and whether the total income of their places is ſufficient to ſupport, in a decent and creditable way to themſelves and to the office, perſons excluded (by being prevented from taking orders) from one help towards it, enjoyed by moſt other members of the Univerſity.

But *above all*, the fees of the ſeveral Officers concerned in the Vice-chancellor's and Commiſſary's courts call for a review and reform; a buſineſs in which no new burden will be brought on the Univerſity cheſt. A bare glance of the eye over the table of them in the Vice-chan-

chancellor's ſtatute book is ſufficient to convince any one of the want of it. And though a principal intention of thoſe courts is, that redreſs of injuries may be obtained, and offences puniſhed, at a moderate coſt; yet there is abundant ſcope to raiſe the fees of the Officers in them, ſo as to recompenſe their labours, and render it worth their while to make themſelves maſters of the buſineſs of it, without ſubjecting the ſuitors in them to expences bearing any proportion to thoſe incurred by ſuitors in the higher courts of law. From whence alſo this farther advantage would ariſe, that ſufficient encouragement being given for practiſers in them, tutors would have no occaſion to appear in the diſagreeable and unbecoming ſituation in which they have appeared in ſome late inſtances, of palliators, or advocates, of thoſe faults of their pupils, which the relation they

ſtand

ſtand in to them, obliges them to uſe their beſt endeavours to diſcover, diſcourage, and puniſh.

And beſides a new regulation of the fees of theſe courts, *diſuſe*, or very *rare uſe*, has made a review and ſettlement of their practice, of the ſubjects of judicature, and of the diſtinct powers of the ſeveral judges in them neceſſary. And if, upon review, obſcurities or defects ſhould be found in any of them, application ſhould be made to the proper powers, for explaining or ſupplying them.

Nor can any ſubject more earneſtly demand, or be more worthy of our moſt ſerious attention. They have been planned for us by the ableſt ſtateſmen, and moſt zealous patrons of the Univerſity. They have been eſtabliſhed by the wiſeſt princes,

princes, and moſt deſirous to encourage learning. They have had the approbation and ſanction of the legiſlature. And what theſe great authorities have impreſſed a mark of veneration upon, the ſober reaſon of every friend to learning and good morals muſt approve. Our body muſt labour under the greateſt difficulties, if it could at all ſubſiſt, without ſuch a tribunal. Diſorders of the moſt pernicious kind would be introduced, and reign with impunity; and its other privileges would be invaded, and ſoon annihilated. Its members would be harraſſed and ruined by the attendance in other courts, on ſuits inconſiſtent in their tedious length with a courſe of ſtudies, and in their great expence with a ſcanty income. — Indeed we may diſcern the fatal conſequences that would attend the entire *failure* of ſuch a power, from the ill effects experienced within a

few

few years paſt from the *diſuſe* of it. Extenſive and deſtructive credit has been given to our youth, and then their perſons ſeized by writs from other courts. Hence *they* have been involved in ſhame and diſtreſs; and their *parents* have had their peace of mind diſturbed by ſuch proceedings, and their circumſtances diſtreſſed to extricate them. But if our privileges were adhered to and aſſerted; if the recovery of debts from the members of our body was reſtrained (as it ſhould be) to the authority of this court, credit would ſeldom be given beyond what can be juſtified in it. Few would riſque ſuch ſums as they knew would ſubject them to puniſhment in the very court in which only (if we are not wanting to our own rights) they can ſue for their recovery. They would not (as now) become firſt the ſeducers to extravagances, and then the ſevere chaſtiſers

of them. They would not undermine and ruin their *own preſent* ſupports, and thoſe who are to be the *future national* ſupports. They would not be the promoters of thoſe diſorders which they afterwards ſo loudly complain of, and by which they ſometimes grievouſly ſuffer.

And they who fail in obtaining on demand their juſt and legal rights, would ſurely eſteem themſelves happy in having at home a forum to have recourſe to, in which they may recover them with ſpeed, and at little expence.

Nay, even offenders againſt our ſtatutes and rules of diſcipline, or the laws of the land, (ſo far as they are ſubjected to the cognizance of theſe courts) cannot but wiſh rather to undergo *their* judgements, than be brought into, and receive their ſentences from, the more public *national*

tional ones. Perſons who appear in *them* are more expoſed to public view and ſhame. The *letter* of the law cannot be departed from. Juries cannot indulge feelings for youthful inexperience, indiſcretion, and heats. In *theſe* courts the judge is not bound by ſuch *ſtrict* rules of law. Much is left to his *diſcretion*; and very *rightly*. Experience will have habituated him to the errors of youth, and inſtructed him in the proper reſtraints upon them. He has the beſt opportunities of becoming acquainted with the *general* characters of the offenders. Every tender feeling, every motive of candor, will uſually temper his juſtice with mercy, as far as may be conſiſtent with the reformation of the offenders, and the neceſſary ſupport of government among us. Where flagrant caſes call forth his ſeverer ſentences, though this will be to

the ſufferings of a *few*, yet by preventing crimes, it will be for the *general* good; and in moſt caſes it will be in his power either to *relax*, or entirely to *reverſe* them, on tokens of having wrought their proper effect, ſorrow for paſt conduct, and reſolution of better for the future.

And perſons of all ranks and profeſſions, who have ſons or relations in the Univerſity, who have any connection with it, are friendly to it, or have any ideas of the education of youth, cannot entertain the moſt diſtant wiſh, to expoſe to the public eye, and commit to laſting memory, the occaſional follies and faults of thoſe who are yet *training* to learning and virtue, and to fill hereafter the *uſeful* and *important* offices of ſociety. They *muſt*, they *will* wiſh to have them corrected within our own limits, and then conſigned to oblivion.

I hope

I hope I ſhall be excuſed for dwelling on the ſubject of theſe courts longer than my title-page will well warrant, and for ſome warmth of expreſſion in doing it. It is the effect of a firm perſuaſion that the *utility*, *proſperity*, and, perhaps, *exiſtence* of the Univerſity, depends much on the preſervation of their authority, their due regulation, and conſtant exerciſe.

It is but juſt, however, to acknowledge that the effecting theſe deſirable purpoſes will probably be attended with much more conſiderable difficulties than the neceſſary alterations in any of the other particulars here pointed out. But let them not deter from attempting it. Much may be done by attentive conſideration of the ſubject, by the communications, the united efforts, and the perſeverance of prudent men. And if the attempt ſhould be attended with any

conſiderable degree of ſucceſs, the labour employed in it will be abundantly compenſated, by the ſalutary effects which will probably be experienced.

After thoſe important objects have had their due conſideration, and received ſuch improvements as they ſhall be thought to require and admit, there are others of inferior conſequence, but yet claiming attention.

The ſtate of our wine-licences ſtands very much in need of it.

The times call particularly for a reviſion of the contribution to the poor of the town.

The act of parliament for paving the ſtreets of Cambridge wants much alteration and amendment. The *penalties for neglect*

neglect of repairing are, through length of time, become far unequal to the *expence of repairing*. The mode of levying, and the application of them, ſeem to want farther explanation and direction; and the clauſe limiting the price of the pavior's work ſhould, without doubt, be entirely repealed, as unjuſt in itſelf, and impoſſible to be executed. And whenever the alteration of this act is undertaken, it may be worth conſideration, whether without *new paving* the town (the attempt towards which has more than once been laid aſide after due deliberation) the *lighting* it may not be practicable and adviſeable.

For the examination into the above ſtated particulars, it is propoſed that one or more ſyndicates (as ſhall be judged requiſite) ſhall be appointed to take that taſk upon them; and to prepare graces,

to

to be ſubmitted to the ſenſe of the Senate, for ſuch alterations on the ſeveral ſubjects, as ſhall appear fitting to them, after careful examination, and mature deliberation.

Some ſeem to have been *long* and *much* wanted, and the *means* are now happily in our power. The uſing them accordingly will prove that they are placed in good hands. The application of part of our increaſed revenues, as above ſuggeſted, demands our *firſt* and *immediate* attention. An edifice, or outward decorations, may hereafter have their proper ſeaſon; but the moſt ſumptuous and elegant ones can never bring ſuch *real* and *laſting* honour to the Univerſity, as it would derive from correcting theſe defects and injuries of time and accident. The former will attract the attention and admiration of the tranſient beholder; the

the latter will remove ſome ſeeming *juſt* occaſions of reproach, and obviate *groundleſs* and *malicious* ones. On the other hand, it will furniſh arguments in favour of the Univerſity to its friends, and gain the approbation and applauſe of all unprejudiced and ſerious perſons of the *preſent*, and of *all* times.

Several of the inferior Officers of the Univerſity have within a few years paſt (on application) had their ſalaries augmented, reaſon and juſtice appearing to require it. But while we do what is juſt and kind by theſe, let us not overlook the *ſuperior* ones, nor think *them* leſs worthy of marks of our equity and favour, becauſe they have not *aſked* for an increaſe of their emoluments; nor *their* labours in *their* way leſs deſerving of encouragement, becauſe their whole ſupport does not depend upon the produce

duce of their offices. Nor let us delay much longer the extending our favour in this way to them, leſt we loſe the means of doing it. They who have already experienced our generoſity will not be wanting to repeat their requeſts for farther effects of it, while they ſuppoſe the means of gratifying them plentiful. Others with more diſtant connections, encouraged by their ſucceſs, will form plauſible pretenſions, and teize with their applications, (if not prevail upon) a generous and benevolent body. Solicitations for the relief of real or feigned neceſſities, and for lightening the burdens of people around us will abound; and fanciful applications of ſome of our ſuppoſed ſuperfluities will be ſtarted, and eagerly preſſed. Thus, if we employ not our ſavings in ſuch ways as ſhall be juſt and reaſonable in themſelves, creditable and beneficial to our body, there is danger,

danger, leſt in a little farther time they ſhould be crumbled away, and beſtowed on trifling or unworthy objects; on works in which the Univerſity has little or no concern, or on projects which have ſome preſent apparent recommendation, but no ſolid uſe, or real claim to our attention or aſſiſtance.

Impreſſed for ſome time paſt with theſe ideas, the Writer preſumes now to lay them before his brethren of the Senate. Among the inducements which have prevailed with him to do ſo, it has been no inconſiderable one, that however unfit he may be in other particulars to recommend the ſubjects here treated of to their conſideration, yet he has this *one* almoſt *peculiar* fitneſs, that he can be liable to no ſuſpicion of *intereſted* views. His ſituation has for many years paſt removed him from all *intereſt* in any of the offices here

here pointed out for favour or improvement, excepting *one*; and *now* he is out of all proſpect of intereſt in that alſo. — If what he has here offered ſhall be thought worthy of their attention, he will be happy in having been the inſtrument of exciting it. If it ſhall not, he will comfort himſelf with having ſtated to them what *appeared to him to merit and require it*; and with that indulgence which well-intended (though injudicious) propoſals can never fail to meet with from the candor and liberal ſentiments of ſuch perſons as compoſe the body of the Univerſity.